

A CAPTAIN IN THE RANKS

By George Carey Eggleston

SYNOPSIS.

Captain Guilford Duncan, C. S. A. takes part in the last fight, at Appomattox, and leaves the army. He then determines to go to Cairo, Ill. Although well educated and a lawyer, Captain Duncan is without family or money, and works his passage to Cairo. Here he saves Captain Hallam's cotton from fire, and Captain Hallam, a modern "captain of industry," hires Captain Duncan, and quickly advances in his employer's estimation. He saves Captain Hallam's coal fleet from destruction by a storm, and is made a partner by Captain Hallam. The young man becomes a force of good among the young men of Cairo. Barbara Verne, a young lady, runs the boarding house in which Captain Duncan takes his meals. Captain Duncan is thanked by Barbara for saving her from annoyance by mischievous boys. He determines to call upon her.

Captain Duncan invites Barbara to a dance. He incurs the enmity of Napper Tandy, a capitalist, a rival of Captain Hallam, by making of the latter's coal mine a paying property, in competition with one of Tandy's properties. At the coal mine Duncan meets an old acquaintance, Dick Temple, now working as a miner. Dick Temple suggests a way to increase the output of the mine and is appointed engineer. XVI—Duncan, who is in love with Barbara. Napper Tandy attempts to bribe Duncan. Duncan proposes to Barbara. She tells him she cannot give him a decided answer.

(Continued from Last Week.)

CHAPTER XIX.

THE next morning, very early, Guilford Duncan's negro servant—for he kept one now—brought him a note from Barbara. It read in this wise:

I wish you would take your meals at the hotel for a few days, or a week or two—till you hear from me again.

There was no address written at the top of the sheet and no signature at the bottom. There was nothing that could afford even a ground for conjectural explanation. There was nothing that could call for a reply. Perhaps there was nothing that could warrant a reply of excuse or impertinence. Nevertheless Guilford Duncan sent by the hands of his negro servant an answer to the strange note. In it he wrote:

I have told you of my love. I tell you that again, with all of emphasis that I can give to the telling. I have asked you to be my wife. I ask it again with all of earnestness and sincerity, with all of supplication, that I can put into the asking. Oh, Barbara, you can never know or dream or remotely imagine how much these things mean to me and to my life.

I shall take my meals at the hotel—not at all—until you bid me come to you for my answer.

Then, with resolute and self-controlled mind, Guilford Duncan set himself to work. He prepared his report upon the proposed railroad extension, condemning it and giving adequate reasons for his condemnation.

He was still indignant that Napper Tandy should have offered him a bribe, and in the first draft of his report he had made a statement of that fact as an additional reason for his adverse judgment; but, upon reflection, he rewrote the report, omitting all mention of the bribe offer. Then he wrote to Tandy—a grievous mistake—telling him that he had sent in an adverse report and that he had omitted to mention Tandy's offer in it.

This gave Tandy the opportunity he wanted, and Guilford Duncan was not long in discovering that fact. A week later Captain Will Hallam said to him:

"So you've been quarreling with Napper Tandy?"

"Yes," answered Duncan. "He offered to bribe me to make a false report in the railroad extension matter."

"Why didn't you tell me about it?"

"Oh, I didn't want to bother you with a whining. I rejected the bribe, of course, and told him what I thought of him, and that seemed to me enough."

"Well, it wasn't. You ought to have told me. Then we could have made him put his offer into writing or make it in my presence. As it is he's got you where the hair is uncommonly short."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, he has written to the financiers telling them that as soon as they employed you, you went to him and demanded a payment of \$10,000 as an inducement to you to make a favorable report; that he refused and that consequently your report was adverse. They will refuse to build the railroad, but they have written to ask me as to your integrity."

"The infernal scoundrel! How?"

"It doesn't pay to call him names. We must think out a way to meet this thing."

"I'll horsewhip him on the street!" exclaimed Duncan.

"No, don't! That would only advertise the matter and do no good. A man of your physique has no occasion for fear in horsewhipping a man like Napper Tandy, and can show no courage by doing it. The only result would be that people would say there must be something in his accusation, else you wouldn't be so mad about it. You have made a good many enemies, you know, and they will take pleasure in repeating Tandy's accusations. Really, Duncan, you ought to have been more discreet. You ought to have taken a slyness with you, when you went

to his house for consultation. As it is, the financiers have so far believed in you as to reject his scheme on your report and in face of his accusation, but he'll do you a mighty lot of damage in Cairo and elsewhere. I don't know what to do."

"I do," answered Guilford Duncan resolutely. "A year ago you and Ober wanted to make me mayor of this town. I explained to you that I was ineligible then, not having been long enough a resident of the state. I am eligible now, and I shall announce myself today as a candidate."

"What good will that do?"

"It will give the people of the city a chance to pass upon my integrity—to say by their ballots what they think of me, and incidentally it may give me an opportunity to say what I think and know of Napper Tandy."

"I don't know so well about that. You see, people don't always express their opinions by their votes. They let their politics and their prejudices have a say, and you know you have made a good many enemies. Then, again, what good will it do you to tell the public what you think of Tandy? That won't convince a living soul who isn't convinced already. The rest will say you are naturally very angry with the man who found you out—the man from whom you unsuccessfully tried to extort a bribe."

"You see there were no witnesses present when your interview with Tandy occurred. That was a capital mistake on your part. Then, too, you went to his house for this business, and people will say that that, too, looks bad. You have destroyed the invitation he sent you, and so you have nothing to show that you didn't go to his house, as he says you did, without invitation in order to extort a bribe. It's a bad mixup, but for you to go into politics would only make it worse. We must find another way out. Keep perfectly still and leave the matter to me. I'll plan something." Then suddenly a thought flashed into Captain Will Hallam's mind.

"By Jove! I've got it, I believe. Go down to our bank and ask the cashier, Mr. Stafford, how many shares we can control in the X National—Tandy's bank. He's president, you know."

Without at all understanding Captain Hallam's purpose, Duncan went upon this mission, returning presently with the information that in one way and another the Hallam bank controlled forty-eight shares of the X National's stock, or three shares less than a majority of the whole. He brought also the message from Stafford that as Tandy himself controlled the remaining fifty-two shares it would probably be impossible at present to buy any more.

"I don't know so well about that," said Hallam reflectively. "I've managed in my time to get a good many impossible things done. I'm not a very firm believer in the impossible." Then suddenly he turned to Duncan and fired a question at him:

"Have you a friend anywhere whom you can trust—one not known in Cairo?"

"Yes, one."

"You are sure you can trust him?"

"Yes, absolutely."

"You wouldn't hesitate to put a pile of money into his hands without a scrap of paper to show that the money was yours, not his?"

"I would trust him as absolutely as I would trust you or me."

"All right, who is he?"

"Dick Temple, the mining engineer and superintendent."

"Telegraph him at once. Ask him to come down on the evening train. Tell him to say nothing about knowing you or me, but to come to your rooms this evening. I'll see him there."

Duncan took up a pad of telegraph blanks and a pencil. He had scarcely begun to write when Hallam stopped him.

"Never do that!" he exclaimed. "Never write a message on a pad, especially with a pencil."

"But why not?"

"See!" answered Hallam, tearing off the blank on which Duncan had begun to write and directing attention to the blank that lay beneath. "The impression made by the pencil on the under sheet is as legible as the writing above. It would be awkward if Tandy should pick up that pad and find out what you had telegraphed. Always tear the top blank off the pad and lay it on the desk before you write on it."

"Thank you! That's another of your wise precepts. I wonder I didn't think of it before."

"Oh, hardly anybody ever does think of such things, but they make trouble."

That night Hallam, Duncan and Temple met in Duncan's rooms. Hallam promptly took possession by requesting Duncan to "go away somewhere while I explain matters to Temple."

When Duncan had taken his leave Hallam plunged at once into the heart of things.

"Duncan tells me you're his friend—one who will stand by him."

"I am all that, you may be sure, Captain Hallam."

"Very good. Now is the time to show yourself such. Duncan has got himself into something worse than a hole, and his whole career, to say nothing of his honorable reputation, is in danger. You and I can save him."

"Would you mind telling me the exact situation? Not that I need to know. In order to do anything you should would be helpful, but if I fully understand the matter I shall know exactly what to do in any little emergency that may come about."

"Of course, of course. It's stupid this way; Duncan is so straight that he never occurs to him that other people are different. There are some things so utterly mean that it simply can't imagine any man, capable

of doing them. So he doesn't take necessary precautions. It was all right for him to offend Napper Tandy by doing his own best up there at the mines, but he ought to have known enough of human nature not to put himself in old Napper's power when he felt bound to offend him worse than ever."

Then Captain Will told in detail the story of the visit to Tandy, the bribe offer, the adverse report and the way in which Tandy had made the whole affair appear to have been an effort on Duncan's part to extort a bribe and betray those who had employed him. Temple readily grasped the situation.

"The worst of it is," he said, "Duncan can't even sue the old scoundrel for libel without making matters worse. Tandy would stick to his story, and as there were no witnesses that story would seem probable to people who don't know Duncan. What are we to do, Captain Hallam?"

"Well, it all depends upon your shrewdness and circumspection. Tandy is president of the X National bank, you know. That's his club to fight me with. So little by little I've bought in there—through other people, you understand—so that now Stafford and I own forty-eight of the bank's hundred shares of stock, though on the books our names do not appear at all. Tandy owns the other fifty-two shares, I suppose, or at least he controls them. Indeed, whenever a stockholders' meeting occurs he votes practically all the stock, for it has been my policy to hide my hand by having the men who hold stock for me give him their proxies as a blind."

"Now, what I propose is that you shall manage somehow to get hold of a little block of the stock. Three shares will be enough to give me the majority, but I'd rather make it four or five shares. If we can get the stock I'll surprise Tandy out of a year's growth by going into the stockholders' meeting, which occurs about tea days from now, and proceed to elect a board of directors for the bank. I'll select the men I want for directors, and the board will at once make Guilford Duncan president of the bank, leaving old Napper a good deal of leisure in which to enjoy life. He'll need it all to convince anybody that there's anything shady in Guilford Duncan's character after it is known that Will Hallam has made him president of a bank."

Hallam chuckled audibly. He was enjoying the game, as he always did. "Indeed, he will, but everything, as I understand it, depends upon my ability to secure the necessary shares of stock."

"Yes, it all hangs on that, and it will be a ticklish job. Tandy is as witty as any old fox. You're sure he doesn't know you?"

"Neither by sight nor by name."

"You're sure nobody in his bank knows you and your relations with me?"

"Yes, I am certain. I was never in this town before, and as for my relations with you, why, they have existed for so brief a time, at such a distance from Cairo and are so obscure in themselves that I think nobody knows them. Besides, you might discharge me, you know, if that should become necessary."

"We won't consider that as even possible. Now, as to ways and means. You see, I depend upon you alone, and of course you must have a free hand. You mustn't consult me or Stafford or Duncan or anybody else. You are to act on your own judgment, furnish your own supply of sagacity and get that stock in your own way."

"I'll do it, even if I have to resign from your service and hunt another job. But I must have some money."

"Of course. How much?"

"Well, the stock will cost a trifle over par, I suppose—somewhat more than \$1,000 a share. I should be prepared to buy a block of ten shares. You see, I might find a block of that kind which the owner would sell 'all or none.' I should have, say, \$11,000 or \$12,000 at instant command."

"All right, I'll have Stafford open an account with you in our bank tomorrow morning, with a credit balance of \$12,000, and you can check."

"Pardon me, but if I offer checks on your bank Tandy will suspect our alliance."

"That is true. You must have the greenbacks themselves. I'll send for Stafford now and have him give you the money in large bills tonight."

"Pardon me," answered Temple, "but if I go to him with so great a sum in actual"—

"Yes, I see. That would certainly arouse suspicion. What have you in mind?"

"Why, you or your bank must have banks in correspondence with you—banks in Chicago or, better still, New York?"

"Yes, of course."

"Can you not telegraph to one of them and arrange to have them say in response to a dispatch of inquiry from Tandy's bank that my credit with them is good for \$12,000 and that if I wish to make use of some money in Cairo they will pay my drafts up to that amount?"

"That's it. That will be the best plan in every way. You'll need identification, and I'll arrange that. You're stopping at the hotel, of course?"

"Yes."

"Very well. I'll call there on my way home and tell the proprietor, Jewett, to go to the bank and identify you whenever called upon."

"Will he not talk?"

"No, I'll tell him not to, and—well, you know, I'm just now arranging a heavy loan for him. He is paying off the remaining mortgage money for the hotel

in installments. That's all, I think. I'll send the Fourth National bank of New York a night message. It will be delivered before banking hours tomorrow morning, but for fear of slips, you'd better wait till noon before giving that bank as your reference. Good night. Remember that everything depends on you, including Guilford Duncan's reputation for integrity."

Temple sat for half an hour thinking and planning. He was determined to make no mistakes that might imperil success. To that end he was trying to imagine, in advance, every difficulty and every emergency that might arise. At last he rose, took his hat, turned the lamp out and left the room.

"This is the very toughest bit of engineering," he reflected, "that ever I undertook. Well, so much the greater the credit if I succeed. But I don't care for the credit. I care only for Guilford Duncan in this case."

(To be continued.)

OUR WEEKLY FASHION LETTER

A TIMELY REVIEW OF THE LATEST MODES (Special) By JUDIC CHOLLET

SAKTORIAL WRINKLES.

Roses the Favorite Summer Flower For Hats—Models Are Larger.

Roses of every shade and kind are the favorite flowers this summer. Many of them are produced in shades unknown to the horticulturist, but they are so beautiful that one would like to see a garden full of them.

The new summer millinery is a vast improvement on the spring hats. Some of the models are larger, but not unduly so, and the bleaching of colored tulle is very effective.

A favorite summer shape is the Watteau in Leghorn straw tied with black silk or velvet ribbon and wreaths of flowers on the crown.

Quaint shaped hats of light straws and tulle are trimmed with gold and silver buckles, and lace hats, too, will

SNAPSHOTS OF THE MODE.

A Touch of Color on White Costumes. Vivid Shades Worn.

All white frocks are receiving touches of color, such as a vivid shade of green or pink. Often a single rose worn in the hair or on the corsage will give the fashionable flash of color. Green belts, hats and sunshades are extremely swaggar worn with white costumes.

A vivid shade of green linen for gowns is much worn. To be sure, it fades with every wear, but most of the colored linens have an unfortunate habit of changing color. These suits are made plain, with circular or straight

skirts and hip jackets. The jacket seams are stitched and the revers are long and pointed, fashioned either from the linen or crocheted lace. White plique is used in some instances.

Natural pougee makes the natty bathing suit seen in the cut. The skirt is circular, with two plaits laid down the front seams. The front of the plaited bodice, sleeve ruffles and sailor collar are buttonholed with brown silk and embroidered with French dots. The girdle is of brown open meshed braid.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

Vindictive.

Naggus—What are you going to do with the hero and heroine of that magazine story you're running now? Marry them? Bonus—Certainly. They will be married in the last chapter. Naggus—I'm glad of it. It will serve them right.—Tit-Bits.

A Hard Case.

"You say you had to give the patient chloroform twice?"

"Yes," replied the dentist. "I had to give it to him the second time to extract the money."—Detroit Free Press.

We have no right to say that the universe is governed by natural laws, but only that it is governed according to natural laws.—Carpenter.

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